

March 18, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

I can appreciate, in the current pandemic climate we're experiencing, you may have some concerns about the mobile blood donation event Canadian Blood Services is hosting at your location. I am reaching out to update you on our enhanced safety measures and to thank you for your ongoing support of patients in Canada during this time.

Despite the current situation, the need for blood products doesn't stop. Every day, they are needed for patients undergoing surgery, cancer treatments, and to save lives following traumas such as motor vehicle accidents.

I want to assure you that mobile blood donation events are places of wellness. In response to the evolving COVID-19 situation, we are working closely with health-care partners and are following all recommended guidelines from the federal and provincial governments. We have added measures to our already careful procedures for donor screening and infection control that keep donors, patients, employees, volunteers and our mobile event partners safe. More specifically, this includes:

- Enhanced sanitization methods to our rigorous cleaning procedures.
- A wellness checkpoint at the entrance of every blood donation event. At these checkpoints, we ask about recent travel and donor health. If a donor has travelled in the past 14 days or they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, the donor will not be permitted entrance to the event.
- Increased communication with donors who have booked an appointment to donate. We regularly encourage donors who are feeling unwell to cancel their appointment and stay home, and we have amplified this activity to ensure donors are well informed of these expectations in advance of their appointment.
- Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance of every donation event. When donors meet the criteria to pass through our wellness checkpoint, they are encouraged to use hand sanitizer as they enter the event. There are also other hand sanitizing stations placed throughout the event in addition to handwashing in the accessible restrooms.
- We are adhering to social distancing precautions and are implementing strategies to ensure attendance at our donation events stays under 50 people at all times — this includes our employees. These measures are being implemented in our fixed donor centres and will be in place for all mobile blood donation events.

Work with health-care partners is ongoing and we will continue to adjust our stringent safety standards as recommendations are updated by public health officials.

Blood donation is essential to support patient care in Canada. Provincial and territorial health systems and patients depend on us to keep our products and services related to blood, plasma, stem cells and organs and tissues accessible and safe at all times.

We take this responsibility very seriously.

Right now, we are working to boost our blood inventory to ensure we can continue to meet patients' needs in the coming weeks and months. Currently, we have enough inventory of O-negative blood to last two days — our target is to maintain inventory between five and eight days to keep up with demand. O-negative blood is universal in that it can be used to treat patients of all blood types. When someone's life is on the line and there's no time to check blood type, hospitals rely on O-negative blood.

Hosting a mobile event is a meaningful and important way for you to support patients in your community and across Canada. Should you have any further questions, I can be reached directly at 780-232-8302 or nicole.russell@blood.ca.

Once again, thank you for your commitment to maintaining an essential service that health-care professionals need for patient care every day.

Sincerely,

Nicole Russell
Territory Manager, Canadian Blood Services